

MUSIC

The music program challenges every student to be creative and expressive through experiences in singing, listening, playing instruments, and reading musical notation. Students learn about and gain an appreciation of many forms of music from many cultures and time periods. The music teacher works with each class on a four-day rotation cycle.

ART

Through experiences with a variety of tools, media, and processes, children have the opportunity to express creativity. Through Westside's art curriculum children develop the concepts of art appreciation, history, production, criticism, and aesthetics. Westside's art teachers strive to create cross-curricular opportunities with classroom teachers, connect with community artists, and provide students with art experiences from around the world. Art teachers work with each class on a four-day rotation cycle.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The objective of the physical education program is to help children learn to move their bodies effectively, efficiently, and purposefully in as many ways as possible. Individual fitness goals are used to help develop a healthy attitude toward a lifetime of physical fitness and nutrition. The physical education teacher works with each class on a four-day rotation cycle.

LIBRARY

Students attend library classes on a four-day rotating cycle. During this time, students check out library materials and are taught and assessed using the National School Library Standards created by the American Library Association for School Librarians (AASL). Our goal is to encourage a passion for reading as well as to create lifelong learners who are able to build new knowledge, organize and share information, work effectively with others, and demonstrate safe and ethical sharing of products.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Students in 5th and 6th grade have the opportunity to participate in Westside's award-winning Band and Strings program. Students will receive 2 - 3 whole group lessons a week during a designated time that does not interfere with other core curriculum. Students will have large group performance opportunities, as well as jazz and solo/small ensemble experiences available to them throughout the year.



ASSESSMENTS

Westside uses multiple assessments to measure student growth and performance. Our assessments meet standards of quality, including reliability, validity, and the absence of bias. National norm-referenced tests (ex: MAP, FAST) compare Westside students to a national sample of students. State assessments are used to determine how well Westside students are meeting state standards and by the Nebraska Department of Education and as part of the annual Nebraska Education Profile report. District and classroom assessments measure student learning in various content areas, including reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

"Instruction is a process of deliberate decision making and action that makes learning more probable and more predictably successful than it would be without teaching."

- Madeline Hunter

Westside Community Schools



Elementary

DISTRICT MISSION

The mission of the Westside Community School District, as an innovative educational system, is to ensure academic excellence and to serve the unique needs of all learners.

The elementary curriculum in the Westside Community Schools is designed to provide students with experiences that are developmentally appropriate and aligned with the Nebraska Educational Standards. Children's needs, interests, questions, prior knowledge, and experiences are crucial to our success. Guided by our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, we believe in developing all teachers through continued professional learning on instructional best practices to meet the needs of all learners. The learner is at the center and this requires the teacher to have strong knowledge and skills in the areas of classroom management, collaboration, planning, human relations, child growth and development, and, most critically, curricular content and materials.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The ELA curriculum reflects the evidence based research from the science of reading which follows a specific scope and sequence of reading skills. Our curriculum includes reading, writing, listening, speaking, spelling, and handwriting. Instruction is provided in large groups, small groups, and individually as needed. K-2 students learn phonological awareness (awareness of how sounds work without the printed word) and phonics (knowledge of letter sounds and the ability to apply that knowledge in figuring out unfamiliar printed words), along with vocabulary, listening comprehension, and essential background knowledge. As students transition to grades 3-6, decoding multisyllabic words and reading comprehension become more of the focus, while continuing to build vocabulary and background knowledge.

SCIENCE

The elementary science curriculum allows students to integrate their natural curiosity and hands-on learning of physical, life, and earth science content with science and engineering practices and concepts that bridge understanding of their natural world.

MATHEMATICS

The math curriculum reflects the 8 mathematical teaching practices from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics approved through 2029.

1. Establish mathematics goals to focus learning
2. Implement tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving
3. Use and connect mathematical representations
4. Facilitate meaningful mathematical discourse
5. Pose purposeful questions
6. Build procedural fluency from conceptual understanding
7. Support productive struggle in mathematics
8. Elicit and use evidence of student thinking

Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All (NCTM, 2014)



SOCIAL STUDIES

The social studies program emphasizes experiences that help children develop an understanding of the world and its peoples. These experiences are drawn from history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, career awareness, human relations, current affairs, and cultural studies.

TECHNOLOGY

WCS is a 1:1 district where all students have access to their own iPad. Students leverage the power of technology by modifying and redefining multiple learning opportunities as well as learning supports.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Special Services Department of Westside Community Schools is responsible for providing a continuum of instructional, behavioral, physical and social-emotional supports to students who have unique needs, in various settings across the District. Special Services is composed of a number of student-centered specialty areas, including: Special Education, Section 504, English Language Learning, School Psychological Services, Excellence in Youth, School Social Work, and School Counseling. In each of our buildings and beyond, students receive or are able to access the supports and services that best allow them to reach their individualized learning goals. Identified experts in each building provide direct, collaborative or consultative services to students with unique learning needs, creating comprehensive programs that engage our learners.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

Excelling in academic classes is important and as we promote through our Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS) framework, students also need to know how to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. All students learn and practice positive social and emotional regulation skills on a weekly basis by participating in the Second Step social-emotional learning program taught by classroom teachers.

